The geography of the provincial administration of the Byzantine empire (ca. 600-1200): I. 2. *Apothekai* of the Balkans and of the islands of the Aegean Sea (7th-8th c.)

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In the first part of this study[1] the geographical approach to the territorial expansion of the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* of Asia Minor proved to be a reliable method for defining the transformations undergone by the administration of the provinces in the late 7th and early 8th c. The result of this research is indicative of the condition of the institution of the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* for two reasons, because the warehouses first started functioning in Asia Minor already during the reign of Constans II (641-668) and because the number of seals preserved from each province is significant. Therefore we are able to follow from the very beginning the evolution of the institution and how it adjusted to serve the needs of the Byzantine provincial administration. Most importantly, the application of the geographical method resulted in unexpected conclusions. It is impossible to explain the geographic flexibility of the warehouse institution in Asia Minor over the second half of the 7th c. and the first quarter of the 8th c. without taking into account the military factor. If it is accepted that the institution of the *apothekai* and that of the themes were related, then it would also have to be accepted that the distribution of the warehouses up until 685 reflects the situation of the early Byzantine times: the military regiments were actually located in the East, where the war against the Arabs was waging in the Armenian provinces, in Lazica, and in Kilikia. The reign of Justinian II marked the turning point of the institution and the warehouses expanded all over Asia Minor. In spite of a return to more conservative policies in the period 695-717, the function of the warehouses in every province of Asia Minor became standard administrative practice under Leo III. The geographic expansion of the provincial warehouses in the 7th c. had nothing in common with thematic territories as described in *De Thematibus* by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in the 10th c. In some cases, the operation of *apothekai* of provinces/territories, or even of regions/cities within the provinces reflects the strategic consid-

1 E. RAGIA, *The Geography of the Provincial Administration of the Byzantine Empire (ca. 600-1200), I.1: The Apothekai of Asia Minor (7th-8th c.)*, Byzantina Symmeikta 19 (2009) 195-245 [hereafter RAGIA, *Geography I*].

erations of the Byzantines.[2] This is particularly evident in the case of eastern Pontus, where the ducatum of Chaldia was founded,[3] and in the case of southern Asia Minor, where the theme of Kibyrraioton was created before 739.[4] The military regiment of the Armeniakoi was the first to be established in fixed provinces. After the single discovered seal of its warehouse, dated to 717/8, the warehouses of the provinces of Kappadokia and of Armenia I, II and IV are not represented in the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* seals.[5] Only after 741/2 did all the *vassilika kommerkia* coincide with thematic territories, a development for which essential prerequisite was the assignment of certain provinces/territories to specific military regiments.[6] The fact that up until the 730's the warehouses in Asia Minor operated mostly on the basis of the Late Roman administrative model is of importance for the present study. The administrative practice which the government followed in the case of Asia Minor contrasts sharply, as we will see below, with the operation of this institution in the Balkans and in the islands of the Aegean Sea.

The first Balkan warehouse, the *apotheke* of Constantinople, began operating under Justinian II. The number of seals from the *apotheke* of Constantinople saved is significantly greater than that from any other province of the empire, in total 24 seals, covering the period until the end of the reign of Leo III. It appears that Constantinople shared in the reform of Justinian II in 687, as most provinces of Asia Minor, because the first seal of its *apotheke* dates to 688/9.[7] The question that can be posed here of why was the biggest commercial center of the empire not represented by any seal during the ruling period of Constans II and Constantine IV, if indeed the warehouse institution served the needs of trade,[8] will not find a definite answer here. There is also no way of know-

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2 RAGIA, *Geography I*, 219-221.

3 On the ducatum of Chaldia see *DO Seals 4*, no 32 with references. Also see RAGIA, *Geography I*, 215-216.

4 The seal of the *apotheke* of Lykia, Pamphylia and the littoral of Isauria, dated in 719/20 anticipates the institution of the theme of Kibyrraiotai. See SBS 6, 148 no 1587; RAGIA, *Geography I*, 219 and note 92.

5 RAGIA, *Geography I*, 222 and note 106.

6 RAGIA, *Geography I*, 218-219.

7 After SBS 3, 173 no 10; W. BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung in Krisenzeiten. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen Administration im 6.-9. Jahrhundert*, FbRG 25, Frankfurt a. M. 2002, App. I, no 82 [hereafter BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung]*). The only seal that could be dated before 687 belonged to Kosmas, *apo hypaton* and *genikos kommerkiarios* of Constantinople. The editors date it to between 685 and 695, but it seems that Kosmas was awarded with the title of *apo hypaton* only in 689. On the career of Kosmas see ZV, 147 table 4. Prior to 689 Kosmas held the title of *stratelates*.

8 N. OIKONOMIDES, *Silk Trade and Production in Byzantium from the Sixth to the Ninth Century: the Seals of Commerciarioi,* DOP 40 (1986) 47-48 [hereafter OIKONOMIDES, *Silk Trade*]. Oikonomides believed that an important amount of foreign trade had been going on in Constantinople. However, he admitted that there is no proof or indication about it.

ing whether Constantinople was involved in procuring army supplies. The warehouse of Constantinople was established a few years after the creation of the theme of Thrace, and its *vassilika kommerkia* disappeared at about the same time the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace started functioning, in the period 730-741. These are coincidences difficult to ignore.[9]

As a general rule the warehouse of Constantinople functioned alone. Only once, in 695/6, the warehouse of the province of Hellespont functioned together with that of the capital of the empire,[10] an arrangement which was probably maintained in the following year (696/7).[11] Apart from these, no other seal actually proves that the warehouse of Constantinople ever functioned with the warehouse of an Asiatic province.[12] This point appears odd and incompatible with the economic co-operation of the capital with its surrounding provinces, particularly Bithynia.[13] Nevertheless, the practice followed by the government is compatible with the administrative tradition of Byzantium: Constantinople did not belong to any province of the empire, it was independent and self-governed.[14]

The warehouse of the city of Mesembria began to function in 690/1. Mesembria was situated on the Bulgarian border and was therefore an

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9 *DO Seals 1*, no 71.15; *DO Seals 5,* no 23.15; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 206, 207. It appears that the *vassilika kommerkia* of Constantinople were short-lived since only one seal is saved. Oikonomides, *Silk Trade*, 47, believed that after abolishing the *vassilika kommerkia* of the City, a *genikos kommerkiarios* and *archon tou vlattiou* resided in Constantinople. The *archontes tou vlattiou*, however, did not always exercise also the function of *genikos kommerkiarios*. This was a rather rare practice. See the list of the *archontes tou vlattiou* in ZV, 202-205. Also see Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, 401-406.

10 *DO Seals 5*, no 23.6; ZV no 190; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 130. The restitution of the inscription is uncertain. The reading of Zacos-Veglery has been contested by the last editors of *DO Seals 5*, who read "Chersonese" instead of "Hellespont", meaning the Chersonese of Caria (Loryma), which is already once attested (*DO Seals 2*, no 65.1; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 129). The geographic combination however is impossible (Gallipolis would have been a better option if indeed any Chersonese was involved, but the chersonese of Gallipolis is a geographic definition absent from seal inscriptions). Also, see Ragia, *Geography I*, 232, note 9.

11 Sandrovskaja, SBS 4, 153-155; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 145. The seal inscription is not easily legible.

12 The warehouse of Hellespont functioned with that of Asia or Lydia, and Bithynia with Phrygia fifty years later, under Leo III.

13 See the comments of M. Leontsini, *Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄ (668-685). Ο τελευταίος πρωτοβυζαντινός αυτοκράτορας* (= EIE/IBE Μονογραφίες 7), Athens 2006, 110-111 [hereafter Leontsini, *Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄*]. See the most complete historical presentation of the region of Bithynia in J.-Cl. Cheynet, *L'époque byzantine,* in: La Bithynie au Moyen Âge, ed. B. Geyer – J. Lefort (= Réalités Byzantines 9), Paris 2003, 311-330. Information on trade conducted in Bithynia is gathered in M. Gérolymatou, *Le commerce, VIIe-XVe siècles*, ibid., 485-498.

14 G. Dagron, *La naissance d' une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (= Bibliothèque Byzantine, Études 7), Paris 1974, 46-47, 60-64, 213 f., esp. 226 f.

important military base of the Byzantines in eastern Thrace.[15] It was the true "gate to Bulgaria".[16] The castle of Mesembria undoubtedly held a Byzantine guards regiment or a regularly raised military unit of the theme of Thrace. Oikonomides asserted that an important amount of commerce between the Bulgarians and the Byzantines was taking place in Mesembria, which he considered as "trading outpost". In his view the treaty of 716 regulated the Bulgarian commerce. Oikonomides' suggestion, however, has been recently contested by Brandes.[17] A Byzantine-Bulgarian understanding was reached much earlier, in 705, when the Bulgarians actively supported Justinian II to recover the capital. Chan Tervel became then the first Bulgarian prince who was awarded the high rank of Caesar.[18] However, the warehouse of Mesembria may be rather linked to the compulsory resettlement of families from the East in Thrace. This event, which occurred during the first reign of the emperor Justinian II (685-695), was recorded in the sources because the founder of the Isaurian dynasty, Leo III, came from one of those resettled families.[19] Following the devastations caused in the Illyricum by Avars, Slavs and Bulgarians, the population that remained loyal to Constantinople was gradually evacuating the eastern provinces of the empire and was being resettled in the European provinces during the 7th and 8th c. The measure of resettlement aimed at economically reviving and militarily reinforcing the region of Mesembria against the

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15 Occasionally Mesembria also served as naval base. At least once it was used by the war fleet during an expedition of Constantine V against the Bulgarians, even though, as patriarch Nikephoros observes, "*the place is without a port and difficult for the sailors*". See *Theophanis Chronographia* vol. I, ed. C. De Boor, Lipsiae 1883, 448.2-4 [hereafter *Theophanis*]; *Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, Short History*, ed. C. Mango, CFHB XIII, Washington DC, 1990, ch. 82 [hereafter *Nikephoros*].

16 On Mesembria see *ODB 2*, 1347-8; P. Soustal, *Thrakien (Thrake, Rodope und Haimimontos)*, *TIB 6*, Wien 1991, 355-359 [hereafter *TIB 6*]; *DO Seals 1*, 173; C. Asdracha, *La Thrace orientale et la Mer noire: geographie ecclésiastique et prosopographie (VIIIe-XIIe siècles),* in: Géographie historique du monde méditerranéen, ed. H. Ahrweiler, Paris 1988, 243-244 [hereafter Asdracha, *La Thrace orientale*]; N. Oikonomides, *Mesembria in the Ninth Century: Epigraphical Evidence,* Byzantine Studies / Études Byzantines 8/11/12 (1981, 1984, 1985) 269-273.

17 *Theophanis*, 497.16-22; F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches, von 565-1453*. Bd. 1, 565-1025, München – Berlin 1924, no 276; *TIB 6*, 79; N. Oikonomides, *Tribute or Trade? The Byzantine-Bulgarian Treaty of 716,* in: Studia Slavico-Byzantina et Medievalia Europensia 1 (1988) 29-31; idem, *Silk Trade*, 47-48; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, 388f., with more bibliography; The treaty of 716 included a clause concerning garments and red leathers, amounting to 30 pounds of gold in value. This, in Oikonomides' view, was the maximum trade value the Bulgarian merchants were allowed to. Brandes sees this clause as proof of tribute paid to the Bulgarians.

18 *Theophanis*, 374.1-375.1; *Nikephoros*, ch. 42; *TIB 6*, 78.

19 *Theophanis*, 391.6-8. This has already been suggested by M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300-1450*, Cambridge 1985, 667-669 [hereafter Hendy, *Studies*]; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, 390-392.

Bulgarians.[20] Seals of the warehouse of Mesembria cover the period up to the decade of 720. Mesembria also participated in the *vassilika kommerkia* system from the 730's until the late 8th c. After it was captured and destroyed by the Bulgarians in the 9th century, its role against the Bulgarians was assumed by Develtos. The city of Develtos, however, is represented in the *vasilika kommerkia* institution by a single seal, dated to 832/3.[21]

A seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* dated to 741-750 indicates a relation of Thrace to Mesembria. The formula of the inscription, "vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria with Thrace", proves that the two *vassilika kommerkia* were not usually functioning together.[22] Indeed the *vassilika kommerkia* of Mesembria have a parallel course to the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace, a point which confirms the city's strategic significance for Byzantium. This particularity of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Mesembria may be associated with the Bulgarian wars of the emperor Constantine V.[23] The function of a separate *apotheke/vassilika kommerkia* of Mesembria can be compared only with that of the *apothekai* of Pontus, meaning the warehouses of Trebizond and Kerasous and of Lazica around the turn of the 7th to the 8th century that also functioned separately from the warehouses of the adjoining provinces. In the case of Pontus it is abundantly clear that administrative practice adjusted to the geo-strategic significance of these regions.[24]

A seal of the warehouse of Panion, Madytos and yet another location (720-729)[25] should be regarded as the first of the warehouse of Thrace. These cities, which belonged to the province of Europe, possessed significant ports on the northern coast of the Propontis.[26] The third city of this warehouse remains unidentified because the seal inscription is illegible at this point. However, it is reasonable to assume that it would have been another city of the coast of the Propontis (Herakleia or Selymbria).

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20 H. Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen zwischen den Balkanhalbinsel und Kleinasien vom Ende des 6. bis zur zweiten Hälfte des 9. Jahrhunderts* (= BBA 59), Berlin 1993, 138, 158 f. [hereafter Ditten, *Verschiebungen*]

21 ZV no 285a; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 278. Hendy, *Studies*, 654-655, argued that the Bulgarians in 812 found the physical contents of an *apotheke* in Mesembria, including siphons and Greek fire. On Develtos see *TIB 6*, 234-235; *ODB 1*, 615-616; Asdracha, *La Thrace orientale*, 260-261. Develtos had an equally important role for the position of Byzantium in the Balkans in the 9th and 10th centuries. Also see Oikonomides in: Studia Slavico-Byzantina et Medievalia Europensia 1 (1988) 31.

22 *DO Seals 1*, no 71.17, 18; ZV no 232a; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 208.

23 Mesembria in the 7th c. was administered by an archon. See *DO Seals 1*, no 77.1-3.

24 Ragia, *Geography I*, 205-209.

25 Koltsida-Makre, no 7; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 201.

26 On Panion and Madytos see *DO Seals 1*, no 55, 57; Asdracha, *La Thrace orientale*, 248-249, 251-253.

If we take into account that the capital of the empire was administratively autonomous and that its warehouse operated separately, then, contrary to the editor's opinion, it is unlikely that this unidentified location was Constantinople. The absence of more seals of this area suggests that it was not standard government practice to maintain an *apotheke* of the province of Europe. The seal of Panion and Madytos, however, is the only one which proves that a warehouse operated in that province at least once, before the *vassilika kommerkia* commenced operating in Thrace.

The *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace finally came into operation in the 730s.[27] In antiquity Thrace was a vast region which comprised all the provinces from Axios River to Pontus and from the Danube to the Aegean Sea. After the Roman conquest, the ancient kingdoms of Macedonia and Thrace were incorporated in the Empire and were divided into provinces,[28] and the content of the geographic term "Thrace" was restricted to the boundaries given to the corresponding administrative unit by the Romans. The Byzantines inherited the Roman provincial administrative system,[29] and so in Byzantium the geographic term "Thrace" corresponded to the Diocese of Thrace, a territory much larger than the region that was officially assigned to the province. This is confirmed by the signatures of the bishops who participated in the Sixth and the Quinisextum Councils of the Church,[30] and also by Constantine VII, who notes that "*the City itself, which was once called Byzantis, was founded in the country of the Thrakians*".[31] The coast of the Propontis belonged

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[27] The first seal is dated to between 730 and 741. See *DO Seals 1*, no 71.15; ZV no 258; BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 207.

[28] See *TIB 6*, 48; H. DITTEN, *Die Veränderungen auf dem Balkan in der Zeit vom 6. bis zum 10. Jahrhundert im Spiegel der veränderten Bedeutung von Thrakien und der Namen der Provinzen der thrakischen Diozesen*, Byzantino-Bulgarica 7 (1981) 157-159 [hereafter DITTEN, *Veränderungen*].

[29] Unfortunately the parts on Macedonia and inner Thrace written by Strabo are lost and only small fragments are saved from what must have been a very large treatise. When Macedonia was conquered, its border with Thrace was, according to Strabo, the river Hevros (modern Maritsa River). See *The Geography of Strabo*, with an English translation by H. L. Jones, The Loeb Classical Library, 1960-1970, VII. Frag. 47 [hereafter *Strabo*]. A detailed description of Thrace is also provided by *Pliny Natural History*, with an English translation, vol. II: *libri III-VII*, by H. Rackham, London – Cambridge, Mass. 1947, IV.XI, 40-50. On the Roman and Late Roman administrative and geographic divisions see DITTEN, *Veränderungen*, 159-161.

[30] *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum. Consilium Universale Constantinopolitanum tertium*, ed. R. Riedinger, Acta Consiliorum Oecumenicorum ser. II, vol. II.II, Berlin 1992, 824.32-33, 825.11, 12 [hereafter *ACO ser. II, II.2*]; H. OHME, *Das Concilium Quinisextum und seine Bischofsliste. Studien zum konstantinopeler Konzil von 692* (= Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 56), Berlin – New York 1990, 149 no 37, 152 no 53 [hereafter OHME, *Quinisextum*]. The bishops of Vizye (province of Europe), of Mesembria (Haemimontus), Sozopolis (Haemimontus), of Traianoupolis (Rhodope) and of Ainos (Rhodope) signed as bishops of Thrace. On the geographic connotation see ASDRACHA, *La Thrace orientale*, 224-225.

[31] *Constantino Porfirogenito, De thematibus*, ed. A. Pertusi (= Studi e Testi 160), Città del Vaticano 1952, 85.42-43; cf. ibid., 84.4-5 [hereafter *De thematibus*].

to Thrace long before it ever belonged to the province of Europe.[32] Now, in Later Roman times, Thrace formed a Diocese, an intermediary administrative unit, which comprised six provinces. These provinces are enumerated by Constantine VII (who followed *Synekdemos* of Hierokles) in his *De thematibus* (10th c.): Europe, Rhodope, Haemimontus, Thrace, Mysia, and Scythia.[33] Thus the emperor equates the territory of the Diocese with the territory of the theme of Thrace. The apparent discrepancy between the historical reality and the territorial expansion of the theme as delineated by the emperor is primarily due to his sources (obviously Strabo's chapters on Thrace and Macedonia had already been lost), and only secondarily to his archaizing taste and his intention to inform his readers on the geography of the region. Nevertheless, the emperor was aware of the fact that Thrace in the past was much bigger than the theme of his times and duly recorded that a large part of the Diocese of Thrace had been officially ceded to the Bulgarians in the 7th c., thus curtailing the territory that he himself delimited.[34]

According to Constantine VII the theme of Thrace was founded in the Balkan parts of the Empire with the aim of protecting the capital of the empire and its hinterland from the new enemy that had breached the frontier of the Danube, the Bulgarians.[35] The fact that the theme's deputy general took part in the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 680 is the first real and undoubted testimony to the establishment of this new military regiment.[36] A few years later, the *exercitus T(h)racisianus* is mentioned among the military units of the empire in the *iussio* of Justinian II (687).[37] In the light of this evidence, the theme of Thrace is one of the oldest of the empire.[38] However, its name at the end of the 7th c. does

32 *Strabo*, VII. Frag. 55.

33 *De thematibus*, 86.48-60. Cf. E. Honigmann, *Le Synekdèmos d'Hieroklès et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre*, CBHB, Forma Imperii Byzantini fasc. I, Bruxelles 1939, 631.4a-637.15 [hereafter *Synekdèmos*]. On different terminology used in the sources see Ditten, *Veränderungen*, 161 f.

34 *De thematibus*, 84.21-23.

35 *De thematibus*, 84.5-8, 85.25-32.

36 *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum. Consilium Universale Constantinopolitanum tertium*, ed. R. Riedinger, Acta Consiliorum Oecumenicorum ser. II, vol. II.I, Berlin 1990, 14.20-21.

37 *ACO ser. II*, II.2, 886.21-25; R.-J. Lilie, *„Thrakien" und „Thrakesion". Zur byzantinischen Provinzorganisation am Ende des 7. Jarhhunderts,* JÖB 26 (1977) 20 f. [hereafter Lilie, *"Thrakien" und "Thrakesion"*]. The author argues that it is not the theme of Thrace, but the Thrakesion that is mentioned in the *iussio*. Contrary to this opinion, see Ragia, *Geography I*, 211-213.

38 On the theme of Thrace see F. Winkelmann, *Byzantinische Rang- und Ämterstruktur im 8. und 9. Jahrhundert. Faktoren und Tendenzen ihrer Entwicklung* (= BBA 53), Berlin 1985, 90-91 [hereafter Winkelmann, *Rangstruktur*]; N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles,* Paris 1972, 349 [hereafter Oikonomidès, *Listes*]; P. Lemerle, *Philippes et la Macédoine orientale à l'époque chrétienne et byzantine. Recherches d'histoire et d'archéologie*, Paris 1945, 120-122 [hereafter Lemerle, *Philippes*]; *TIB 6*, 76-77.

not imply the actual territory of its "landing". No theme, not even in Asia Minor, had apparently any defined territorial expansion before the beginning of the 8th c., a conclusion that is corroborated by evidence from the literary and the sigillographic record.[39]

Thrace in particular cannot form the exception to this conclusion. It is maintained that large areas of the ancient Diocese of Thrace and of the Diocese of Illyricum had been occupied by barbarian populations, Slav or Bulgarian, by the end of the 7th c.[40] In fact, very few cities of Thrace were represented at the Sixth and Quinisextum Ecumenical Councils of the Church by their bishops. Their signatures in the Acts indicate that Byzantium only dominated the coastal zones up to Mesembria.[41] However, the participation or not of bishops in the councils cannot be taken as a proof of the existence of cities/settlements, and certainly not of the presence of enemy population in or around them. If ethnically foreign peoples had occupied large parts of Thrace, the Byzantines would have problems to impose their rule. Nevertheless, the Byzantine administration would not have been neutralized altogether.[42] Therefore the

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39 RAGIA, *Geography I*, 217-219, 222.

40 P. M. BARFORD, *The Early Slavs. Culture and Society in Early Medieval Eastern Europe*, London 2001, 75-76 [hereafter BARFORD, *The Early Slavs*,]; LEONTSINI, *Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄*, 197-202; G. OSTROGORSKY, *Byzantine Cities in the Early Middle Ages*, DOP 13 (1959) 54-57; LILIE, *"Thrakien" und "Thrakesion"*, 35-41; LEMERLE, *Philippes*, 117-118.

41 *ACO ser II*, II.2, 823.7-8, 824.32-33, 825.11-12, 826.13; OHME, *Quinisextum*, 146 no 13,149 no 37, 150 no 39, 151 no 47, 152 no 53; *TIB 6*, 76, 78. The bishops of Herakleia, Vizye, Mesembria, Sozopolis (Apollonia), Panion, Traianoupolis, Selyvria, and Ainos participated in the Councils.

42 *Theophanis*, 347.6-7, 359.13-17; P. LEMERLE, *Les plus anciens recueils des Miracles de Saint Démétrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans, I: Le texte*, Paris 1979, 209.234, 210.238; *II: Commentaire*, Paris 1981, 111 f., esp. 115-116 [hereafter LEMERLE, *Recueil*]; J. KODER – F. HILD, *Hellas and Thessalia*, *TIB 1*, Wien 1976, 56 [hereafter *TIB 1*]; *TIB 6*, 75-76, 77; A. STRATOS, *Το Βυζάντιον στον Ζ΄ αιώνα*, τ. Δ΄, *Κωνσταντίνος Γ΄ (Κώνστας)*, Athens 1972**,** 189-192 [hereafter STRATOS, *Βυζάντιον Δ΄*]. In 656/7, Constans II campaigned against the Slavs in the Thracian hinterland of Constantinople. Justinian II turned against the Bulgarians a few years later, in 688 [see M. GREGORIOU-IOANNIDOU, *Η εκστρατεία του Ιουστινιανού Β΄ κατά των Βουλγάρων και Σλάβων (688),* Βυζαντιακά 2 (1982) 113-117, 119, 121-124]. However, our level of information on Thrace is very low. We only hear of Slavic tribes settled south of the Danube and conquered by the Bulgarians (the Severeis and the Seven Tribes), and of the *proasteion* of a translator – possibly of Slavic origin – in Vizye. Close to Vizye (without further definition) – informs us the unknown author of the second collection of the Miracles of St. Demetrios –, there lived other Slavs who might offer their help to Perboundos, chief of the Rynchinoi, a population settled in regions of Macedonia. Slav manifestations of material culture in the regions of the lower Danube, in lower Moesia and around Thessalonica are nevertheless difficult to locate. On these issues, see Fl. CURTA, *The Making of the Slavs. History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c. 500-700*, CUP 2001, 110-112 with extensive bibliography [hereafter CURTA, *The Making of the Slavs*]; BARFORD, *The Early Slavs*, 67 f, 72-73; P. LEMERLE, *Invasions et migrations dans les Balkans depuis la fin de l'époque romaine jusq'au VIIIe siècle,* RH 211 (1954) 300-301 [hereafter LEMERLE, *Invasions et migrations*]; A. STRATOS, *Το Βυζάντιον στον Ζ΄ αιώνα*, τ. Ε΄ ,

context of the term "Thrace" in seal inscriptions of the 730s implies a territory broader than the province but narrower than the Diocese, corresponding to the regions occupied by the military regiments of the theme of Thrace. This is a plausible assumption that is corroborated by parallel developments in Asia Minor, where the use of names of themes of Asia Minor on the seals becomes common after 730. This means simply that the operation of the *vassilika kommerkia* was finally linked to the themes, while at the same time the *vassilika kommerkia* of the provinces disappeared.[43]

Two seals of the *vassilika kommerkia* of "Thrace and Hexamilion" (751/2),[44] and of "Mesembria with Thrace" (741-750),[45] indicate that the theme extended up to Mesembria to the northeast and comprised Gallipolis to the south. Hexamilion, at the neck of the Gallipolis peninsula, probably had a significant role for the commercial activities of the inhabitants. What is of more interest for this research, however, is that information on the strategic significance and on the military use of Hexamillion is specific in the sources. By fortifying Hexamillion already in the Later Roman times the Byzantine government sought to block the enemies' crossing of the Straights into Asia Minor. The ancient *diolkos* of Hexamillion might also have been used in the 7th c. by the naval forces of the empire during the first Arab blockade of Constantinople.[46] In the

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Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄ (668-685), Athens 1974, 110-115 hereafter Stratos, *Βυζάντιον Ε΄*]. The author of the second collection of the Miracles frames the fifth miracle against the former administrative background and mentions "*Thrace and the Long Walls towards Byzantium*" as devastated [Lemerle, *Recueil I*, 227.284]. This vague piece of information is relevant to events that took place before the Avaro-Slav siege of Constantinople [Lemerle, *Recueil II*, 138-140]. On the measures taken by Constantine IV see infra, note 50, 51.

43 After the single discovered seal of the *apotheke* of the Armeniakon theme there are no seals of the warehouse of the Armenian provinces. After the second seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of the "provinces of the Anatolikoi" (736/7), there are no seals of Phrygia Salutaria; after the first seal of the "strategia of the Kibyrraiotai" (739/40), no seals of Lycia, Pamphylia or Isauria; after the first seal of the "strategia of the Thrakesioi", no seals of Asia [also see Ragia, *Geography I*, 236 note 11]; and after the *vassilika kommerkia* of the *"provinces of the vassilikon Opsikion guarded by God"* (745/6), no seals of Bithynia.

44 *DO Seals 1*, 54.2; ZV no 270; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 249.

45 *DO Seals 1*, no 71.17, 18; ZV no 259 a-d; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 208.

46 Hexamillion belonged to the defence system of the Long Walls of Constantinople, a military unit which protected the capital [A. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284-602. A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey*, Oxford 1964, 231, 656; *Corpus Iuris Civilis vol. III: Novellae*, ed. R. Schöll – G. Kroll, Berlin 1904, repr. Germany 1972, no 26 [hereafter *CIC III*]. The unit was placed under a vicarious of the *magistri praesentales*, while the civil administration of the enclosed territory was entrusted to a vicarious of the *praefectus praetorio per Orientem*; Justinian I placed the regiment and the civil administration under a praetor of Thrace. See J. G. Crow, *The Long Walls of Thrace,* in: C. Mango – G. Dagron (eds.), Constantinople and its Hinterland. Papers from the Twenty-seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993 (= Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies 3), Hampshire – Brookfield 1995, 109-124

8th c. imperial territory in the Balkans expanded, a development that was a result of the efforts of the tireless emperor Constantine V to keep the Bulgarian and Slav population in check. The Thracian provinces south of the Byzantine-Bulgarian frontier were sufficiently represented at the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787), although the province of Europe was represented by more bishops than the province of Thrace and the province of Haemimontus.[47]

The administrative status of Thessalonica around the turn of the 7th to the 8th c. is rather vague. In the Late Roman times the city was the seat of the *praefectus praetorio per Illyricum*.[48] The Miracles of St. Demetrius provide us with the most important information on the situation in the Illyricum in the 7th c.[49] By the end of that century the city of Thessalonica was surrounded by foreign populations that were quite

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(esp. 123-124 on the walls of the Chersonese); G. GREATREX, *Procopius and Agahtias on the defences of the Thracian Cheresonese,* in: ibid., 125-129; B. CROKE, *The Date of the "Anastasian Long Wall" in Thrace,* GRBS 23 (1982) 59-78, esp. 61-63; M. WHITBY, *The Long Walls of Constantinople*, Byzantium 55 (1985) 560-583. The walls of the Chersonese are described in detail by Procopius [*Procopii Caesariensis Opera omnia*, vol. IV, ed. J. Haury, add. et corr. P. Wirth, Lipsiae 1964, IV.10f.]. Hexamilion of Thrace, a six mile isthmus opposite Lampsakus, near modern Bulayir, besides a significant commercial center for the inhabitants of Thrace also formed a *dioikesis* and its church in the middle Byzantine times was a suffragan bishopric of Herakleia [ZV no 260; *DO Seals 1*, no 54; ASDRACHA, *La Thrace orientale*, 249-250]. On the case of 674-678 see C. ZUCKERMAN, *A Gothia in the Hellespont,* BMGS 19 (1995) 234-241.

47 J.-D. MANSI, *Sacrorum consiliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Graz 1960, vol. 13, 380E, 384A, D, E, 385A, B, 388C, D, 396E, 397A. See OSTROGORSKY, in DOP 13 (1959) 59-61; LILIE, *"Thrakien" und "Thrakesion"*, 41-46; *TIB 6*, 81-82. The Thracian territory of Byzantium had been secured by a campaign of the empress Irene in 783/4, which targeted Veroe, Philippoupolis and Anghialos [*Theophanis*, 457.6-11].

48 There is some debate as to whether Thessalonica was also provided with a city eparch, especially after Justinian I had conceived the plan of transferring the seat of the praefectus praetorio per Illyricum in Justiniana Prima [*CIC III*, no 11]. See *DO Seals 1*, 50; LEONTSINI, *Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄*, 204-205; A. KONSTANTAKOPOULOU, *L'éparque de Thessalonique,* in: Communications grecques présentées au Ve Congrès International des Études Sud-est Européénes, Athènes 1985, 157-162; Al. STAVRIDOU-ZAFRAKA, *Τα θέματα του μακεδονικού χώρου. Το θέμα Θεσσαλονίκης ως τις αρχές του 10ου αι.*, Βυζαντινά 19 (1998) 160 f.; LEMERLE, *Recueil II*, 180; idem, *Philippes*, 123-124.

49 The Late Roman administrative frame is mentioned in the second collection three times, of which the third time, more elaborate than the others, is in relating events of the 680s. Of particular significance is the comment of the anonymous author on the refugees coming from the north provinces, which had all been turned into wasteland by the Slavs, to the point that of all cities only Thessalonica survived. See LEMERLE, *Recueil I*, 175.179, 185.197, 227.284. On the events after ca 580 see CURTA, *The Making of the Slavs*, 90 f; BARFORD, *The Early Slavs*, 56 f; S. PATOURA, *Συμβολή στην ιστορία των βορείων επαρχιών της αυτοκρατορίας (4ος-6ος αι.),* Σύμμεικτα 6 (1985) 343-351; LEMERLE, *Invasions et migrations*, 285 f.; idem, *Philippes,* 113-117; P. CHARANIS, *Ethnic Changes in the Byzantine empire in the 7th century*, DOP 13 (1959) 37 f.; DITTEN, *Verschiebungen*, 46 f., 68 f.; an archaeological survey of the Balkan limes of the empire is found in CURTA, ibidem, 124 f.

often causing troubles to the city.[50] Under Constantine IV and Justinian II serious efforts were made to bring those foreign populations under Byzantine control and restore communications with the surrounding areas and with Constantinople in particular.[51] Incorporating Thessalonica in the provincial middle Byzantine administrative system, however, was not a self-evident consequence of those efforts. By the end of the 7th c. there was actually no trace of the Later Roman administrative system in the northern Illyricum. The provincial administration dissolved to such a degree, that even the geographic/administrative term "Macedonia" disappeared and reappeared a hundred years later in a completely different administrative and geographic context.

The first seal of the warehouse of Thessalonica is dated to 713, and the last seal of its *vassilika kommerkia* to 783/4.[52] The case of Thessalonika can only be compared to that of Constantinople. Its commercial activities were undoubtedly significant for the whole of the Balkan Peninsula. M. Hendy has strived to prove that seals of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thessalonika could be associated with military expeditions.[53] Its warehouse, however, cannot be directly linked to any theme, simply because there wasn't any in the area at that time. Nevertheless the dominant position of Thessalonica in the development of the provincial administrative system of the Balkans in the middle Byzantine times is clear. The theme of Thessalonica was founded in the late 8th c., a development which underscores the significance of the city for the provinces around it as chief administrative, military and economic center.[54] The rise of the

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50 For the period that is of interest in this paper, Miracles II. 4 and II. 5 are texts which provide illuminating information on the situation in the Illyricum, around Thessalonica and on government action. The affair of Perboundos is dated by Lemerle around 677/8, and the conspiracy of Mauros and Kouver after 680. See Lemerle, *Recueil II*, 111 f., 137 f.; Stratos, *Βυζάντιον Ε΄*, 71-93; Barford, *The Early Slavs*, 70-71.

51 Lemerle, *Recueil I*, 220.278, 279; *Theophanis*, 364.11-18. The campaigns were directed against Slavs of the Strymon valley and of regions under Bulgarian domination in Thrace. Other Slavic tribes were not as hostile to the Byzantines; the Velegezites, living in the region between Demetrias and Thebes, were apparently on good terms with the empire [Lemerle, *Recueil I*, 214.254]. On the events see Stratos, *Βυζάντιον Ε΄*, 93; idem, *Το Βυζάντιον στον Ζ΄ αιώνα*, τ. Στ΄: *Ιουστινιανός Β΄, Λεόντιος και Τιβέριος*, 685-711, Athens 1977, 21-28 [hereafter Stratos, *Βυζάντιον Στ΄*]; Gregoriou-Ioannidou, in Βυζαντιακά 2 (1982) 111-124; *TIB 1*, 56-57; *TIB 6*, 77-78.

52 ZV no 210, 273; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 159, 260.

53 Hendy, *Studies*, 654, note 438. Oikonomides, *Silk Trade*, 47-48, speculated that an important amount of barter exchange must have been taking place in Thessalonica and considers that the city had had an important role as trading outpost. Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, 392-393, is totally against this idea.

54 *DO Seals 1*, 50-51. The founding of the theme of Thessalonica is dated before 836 or 824 based on information from the literary sources. Sigillographic testimonies, however, indicate a chronology to the late 8th c. See *DO Seals 1*, no 18.27; Winkelmann, *Rangstruktur*, 106, 126-127; Oikonomidès, *Listes*, 352; Stavridou-Zafraka, Βυζαντινά 19 (1998) 158-160; Lemerle, *Philippes*, 129.

administrative district of Thessalonica to thematic status accounts for why the term "Macedonia" was finally transferred to Thrace. The south-western parts of Thrace were cut off from the homonymous theme and formed a new theme at the end of the 8th c., which was named "Macedonia".[55] The fact that seals of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thessalonica stopped being struck at about the same time when the homonymous theme was founded is a noteworthy coincidence.[56] The last known seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thessalonica is dated to 783/4.

On Hellas there is concrete and uncontested information. Hellas was the second Greek territory that was conquered by the Romans after Macedonia. It was one of the most significant and most ancient provinces of the Roman Empire and was therefore governed by a proconsul. Lying in the middle of the eastern Mediterranean, the province of Hellas offered excellent naval bases for commercial and military fleets and was indeed the bastion for controlling the waters of the Aegean and so the access to the Black Sea, of the Near East and of Egypt.[57] The Aegean was the field of action par excellence of the ancient Greeks and of the Byzantines. Dominion over its waters, ports and numerous islands had to be safeguarded at all cost because its preservation was vital for the Byzantine Empire. Thus it comes as no surprise that the provinces of Hellas and of Nesoi shared in the institutional developments as early as the reign of the emperor Justinian II. The Byzantines, especially Justinian II, in the face of the challenge posed by the Arabs at sea, would not let the strategic advantages of Hellas and of Nesoi unexploited.

In 695 the patrician Leontios was nominated *strategos of Hellas*, an event that is duly mentioned by the chronographer Theophanes.[58] The warehouse of Hellas is at this time testified by a single seal dated to 698/9.[59] After that the warehouse disappears for many years and reappears under the *vassilika kommerkia*. It is represented by two seals of the 730s,[60] one of which provides us with the much expected terminology "of the strategia" (generalship) of Hellas in 738/9.[61] The *vassilika kom-*

[55] DO Seals 1, 110-111; LEMERLE, *Philippes*, 122-123; WINKELMANN, *Rangstuktur*, 101-102, 124-125; OIKONOMIDÈS, *Listes*, 349; *TIB 6*, 82. The dating is corroborated by literary information and sigillographic testimonies.

[56] This point has already been noted by C. ZUCKERMAN, *Learning from the enemy and more: Studies in "Dark Centuries" Byzantium,* Millennium 2 (2005) 131-132. The case of Thessalonica really confirms the author's belief that the disappearance of the *vassilika kommerkia* is a sign of the "enhanced administrative status" of the districts in question.

[57] A. AVRAMEA, *Le Péloponnèse du IVe au VIIe siècle. Changements et persistanses* (= Byzantina Sorbonensia 15), Paris 1997, 31-34 [hereafter AVRAMEA, *Péloponnèse*].

[58] *Theophanis*, 368.18-21.

[59] LAURENT, *Médailler*, no 118; BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 144.

[60] ZV 174 table 24; *SBS V*, 138 no 57; BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 210, 225

[61] ZV no 254; BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 244. On the significance of the term "strategia" see ZUCKERMAN, Millennium 2 (2005) 128-131. One would

merkia, then, came to coincide with the theme, to which certain regions had been assigned by that time.[62] "Hellas" in this context carries a technical-administrative as well as a geographic meaning. Two things are worth noting. Firstly, unlike other provinces so far examined in this treatise (Thrace, Macedonia), the term "Hellas" had not lost its geographic/administrative connotation, this meaning that a territory was always assigned to it.[63] Secondly, this was apparently the reason why the name of the province, where the new military regiment was established, was given to the theme. This proves that the Byzantine government was capable of introducing new units in provinces, where it apparently maintained a steady foothold. Indeed, the province of Hellas was the only Balkan region in which the central administration could proceed with practices well tested in the recent past in Asia Minor.

The testimony of Theophanes, corroborated with evidence from the sigillographic record, is uncontested. The theme of Hellas was founded before 695. This conclusion is independent of whether the theme comprised all the lands of the ancient province or not. There is no reason to suppose that it did not, and there is also no reason to suppose that its range of operation did not extend beyond the borders of the ancient province.[64] Raiding enemies had reached Hellas in the late 6th and in the 7th c.,[65] but this did not effect the Byzantine administration. By the end of the 7th c., there were Slavs settled in Thebes and possibly elsewhere.[66] And even though the text called *Chronikon of Monembasia* directly contradicts contemporary evidence and has proved misleading for

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have to agree with the author's argument that this term on the seals of the 8th century *vassilika kommerkia* is the official term used for the military regiments of the empire.

62 On the theme of Hellas see Oikonomidès, *Listes*, 351; Winkelmann, *Rangstruktur*, 92-95, 123-124; *TIB 1*, 57.

63 On the meaning of the term see P. Charanis, *Hellas in the Greek sources of the VI, VII and VIII centuries,* in: Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend Jr, ed. K. Weizmann, New Jersey 1955, 161-176.

64 Avramea, *Péloponnèse*, 28-30, 36-37. The territory of the theme of Hellas, to which also Thessaly belonged, will be examined in a forthcoming study on the Geography of the themes. See *TIB 1*, 37; A. Avramea, *Η βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία μέχρι τοῦ 1204. Συμβολή είς τήν ἱστορικήν γεωγραφίαν,* Athens1974, 28 f.; D. Zakythinos, *Μελέται περί τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρέσεως καὶ τῆς έπαρχιακῆς διοικήσεως έν τῷ βυζαντινῷ κράτει,* ΕΕΒΣ 18 (1948) 49-50.

65 Lemerle, *Recueil I*, 175.179; *Recueil II*, 88-90; Curta, *The Making of the Slavs*, 91-92; Barford, *The Early Slavs*, 60-61; *TIB 1*, 54-56.

66 The Velegezitai were settled in the regions from Demetrias to Thebes [Lemerle, *Recueil I*, 214.254]. The Slavs of the Greek peninsula are well known from sigillographic and other evidence dated mostly to the 8th c. and onwards. See W. Seibt, *Siegel als Quelle fur Slawenarchonten in Griechenland,* SBS 6 (1999) 27-36; idem, *Weitere Beobachtungen zu Siegeln früher Slawenarchonten in Griechenland,* in: Byzantium, State and Society. In memory of Nikos Oikonomides, ed. A. Avramea – A. Laiou – E. Chrysos, Athens 2003, 459-466; *DO Seals 2*, no 8.2; N. Oikonomides, *L'archonte slave de l'Hellade au VIIIe siècle*, VV 55 (80) (1998) 111-118; idem, *A Note on the campaign of Stavrakios in the Peloponnese (783/4)*, ZRVI 38 (1999/2000) 61-65.

archaeologists and historians alike,[67] it has recently become possible, under careful re-examination of the archaeological record, especially of the physical remains that were or could be considered as remains of the Slavic material culture, to correlate the archaeological and the literary records concerning the province of Hellas.[68] On the basis of the evidence one can safely assume that the Byzantine presence in Hellas had been continuous.

Even though the Late Roman province of Nesoi belonged to the Diocese of Asiana and some of the islands were administratively bound to Asia Minor at the end of the 7th c., the treatise on the islands of the Aegean Sea was placed here for reasons of convenience. Indeed the numerous islands of the Aegean Sea were always connected with mainland Greece, to which they gave its dominant maritime character. Nevertheless, it comes rather as a surprise that the changes undergone by the medieval administration regarding the islands evoke the geographic description and classification of the numerous islands of the Aegean Sea as presented by Strabo in his Geography. Starting from the islands close to Crete, Strabo then describes the Cyclades[69] and the Sporades, a group of islands scattered in the southern Aegean Sea between the Cyclades and Asia Minor, to which in his opinion the islands close to Crete also belonged, these being Thera, Anaphe, Melos,

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[67] According to the Chronikon most of the Peloponnese was completely abandoned by its fleeing inhabitants. But the bishops of Corinth, Athens, Argos and Lakedaimon duly signed the acts of the Sixth Council (*ACO ser. II*, II.2, 822.30-31, 824.30-31, 825.14, 19), while in the Quinisextum only the bishop of Corinth was present (Ohme, *Quinisextum*, 146 no 14). See P. Lemerle, *La chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: context historique et légendaire,* REB 21 (1963) 5-49; idem, *Invasions et migrations*, 303-304; Avramea, *Péloponnèse*, 69-72; Ditten, *Verschiebungen*, 48 f.; H. Kalligas, *Η βυζαντινή Μονεμβασία και οι πηγές της Ιστορίας της*, Athens1993, 23-57. Bibliography on the Chronikon of Monembasia is by now enormous. Its manuscript tradition has been recently examined and the text re-edited and thoroughly commented on, along with other testimonies concerning the Peloponnese by E. Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem. Die Chronik von Monembasia und das Sizilianische Demenna. Eine historisch-topographische Studie* (= Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften 294/Veröffentlichungen der Komission für die Tabula Imperii Byzantini 8), Wien 2001.

[68] Evidence of Slavic settlements comes mostly from north-western Peloponnese, meaning the region of Olympia, and date later than the 7th c. See Avramea, *Péloponnèse*, 72f., 80 f., 86 f.; A. Lampropoulou – H. Anagnostakis – V. Konte – A. Panopoulou, *Συμβολή στην ερμηνεία των αρχαιολογικών τεκμηρίων της Πελοποννήσου κατά τους «σκοτεινούς αιώνες»,* in: Οι σκοτεινοί αιώνες του Βυζαντίου (7ος-9ος αι.), (= EIE/IBE Διεθνή Συμπόσια 9), Athens 2001, 189-225; A. Avramea, *Les Slavs dans le Péloponnèse,* ibidem, 293-302; Curta, *The Making of the Slavs*, 308, 335-338 [with excellent analysis of objects typically attributed to Slavs, such as Slavic bow fibulae and ceramic findings in 190 f.]; Barford, *The Early Slavs*, 61-62, 71-72.

[69] *Strabo*, 10.5.1 f. According to Strabo the Cyclades were initially composed by twelve islands; other writers were however counting them as fifteen. Cf. *Chrestomatheia*, in: *Geographi Graeci Minores*, ed. C. Müller, Hildesheim 1965, vol. II, 592.43 (hereafter *GGM II*); J. Koder, *Aigaion Pelagos (Die Nördliche Ägäis), TIB 10*, Wien 1998, 54-55 [hereafter *TIB 10*].

Amorgos, but also Astypalaia, Karpathos, and Patmos close to Asia Minor.[70] The bigger islands Kos, Rhodes, Samos, Lesbos, are treated in separate chapters, which follow the description of western Asia Minor.[71] The geographic education of the Byzantines included, except for the Geography of Strabo, with which they were fairly familiar, the work of Dionysius the Periegetes (1st c. A.D.), a difficult poem written in Homeric language and style, in which quite often clarity is sacrificed to poetic rules. Dionysius roughly divided the "wonderful deep sea of the Aegean" in two parts while sailing with a SW-NE route towards the Straights of Hellespont. Thus the islands to the left, including Lemnos and Samos, belonged to Europe, and those to the right belonged to Asia Minor. Among these the Cyclades held a special place, because they were the first to come across on the journey to Hellespont. The Sporades islands, however, are mentioned without any useful comment. Lastly, the so-called "Ionian islands" were the islands close to Asia Minor.[72]

The administrative division of the Late Roman provinces partly ignored the geographic divisions of the ancient geographers. Thus, according to the lists of the islands in Synekdemos of Hierokles, the province of Nesoi comprised islands of the modern Cyclades mostly south of Paros and Naxos, but also included Andros and Tenos to the north, the modern Dodekanese, and the islands of the eastern Aegean up to Tenedos.[73] The islands closer to the Greek coast belonged to the province of Hellas, including Kea, Delos, Mykonos, and also Skyros, Lemnos and Imbros, and of course Euboea.[74] There are two good reasons for this arrangement. Firstly, the assignment of Delos to Hellas indicates that the traditional attachment of the island to Athens (meaning the ancient Athenian Alliance and the economic patronage of Delos by the city of Athens) had not been ignored by the Roman administration.[75] Secondly, the sailing route to Constantinople would pass by or close to the islands of Euboea, Lemnos and Imbros. This division of the islands unexpectedly made the province of Hellas border on the Diocese of Thrace, a fact which strongly points to the southwest-northeast division of the Aegean Sea, as it was described by Dionysius. Lastly, Thasos and Samothrake were attached to Macedonia I by the Romans.

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70 *Strabo*, 10.5.14-19; *TIB 10*, 55.

71 *Strabo*, 13.2.1 f., 14.1.14 f., 35, 14.2.5 f., 19 f.

72 *Dionysii Orbis Descriptio*, in: GGM II, 135.513-136.1. An extensive commentary on Dionysius based mostly on Strabo was written in the 12th c. by Eustathios, the metropolitan bishop of Thessalonica. Cf. *Eustathii Commentarii,* in: GGM II, 317.31 f., 320.12 f. On the terms "Cyclades" and "Sporades" see E. Malamut, *Les iles de l'Empire byzantin, VIIIe-XIIe siècles* (= Byzantina Sorbonensia 8), Paris 1988, vol. I, 47-48 [hereafter Malamut, *Iles*]; K. Amantos, Δωδεκάνησος, BZ 30 (1929-1930) 244-246.

73 *Synekdemos*, 686.1-687.6; *TIB 10*, 73-74.

74 *Synekdemos*, 644.11, 645.15, 646.1-6, 648.5-649.2.

75 *Strabo*, 10.5.4.

The seals of the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* of the islands are significant because they testify to the dissolution of the administrative units of the Later Roman times. In administrative and strategic terms it was reasonable to attach Chios and Lesbos to Asia (690/1),[76] and Rhodes to Caria (695-697),[77] than preserve the old unit of Nesoi, because this arrangement facilitated the control of the sea route from the eastern Mediterranean to Constantinople. One should recall at this point that the islands of Rhodes, Kos, Crete and Cyprus were repeatedly attacked after 654. Rhodes, Smyrne and Kyzikos were occupied by the Arabs during the first blockade of Constantinople.[78] The events of the second half of the 7th c. and of the first years of the 8th c. indicate that Rhodes was turned into a naval base along with its opposite coast, the Chersonese of Loryma. Its warehouse functioned as a single unit with that of Rhodes and the rest of Caria in 695.[79] The particularities of the Aegean were recognized by the administration of the emperor Justinian II, who proceeded to reforms. Indeed the administrative term Nesoi appears only once together with the provinces of Caria and Asia on a seal dated to 687/8, the year in which the institution of the apothekai expanded in almost all the provinces of Asia Minor.[80] The term "Nesoi" cannot be equated to the term "Cyclades", which is also used on a seal of 687-689, because the seals are dated to the same years and their holders were two different persons, Iulianos and Kosmas respectively.[81]

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[76] *DO Seals 2*, no 51.3; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 92.

[77] *DO Seals 2*, no 65.1; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 129.

[78] *Theophanis*, 345.8-11, 353.14 f.; *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio,* ed. G. Moravcsik – J. H. Jenkins, CFHB 1, Washington, D.C. 1967, 84 ch. 20.2-10. See R.-J. Lilie, *Die byzantinische Reaktion auf die Ausbreitung der Araber* (= MBM 22), München 1976, 65-66, 75-77 and note 61 on the complicated chronology; Stratos, *Βυζάντιον Δ΄*, 51-53; idem, *Βυζάντιον Ε΄*, 31-35; J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, Cambridge 1990, 55, 63-64; J. B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, from Arcadius to Irene (395 A. D. to 800 A. D.)*, vol. 2, London 1889 (reprinted: Amsterdam 1966), 289-290; H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles* (= Bibliothèque byzantine, Études 5), Paris 1966, 17-19, 35 f. [hereafter Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*]; E. W. Brooks, *The Arabs in Asia Minor (641-750) from Arabic Sources*, JHS 18 (1898) 187.

[79] Rhodes served as naval base of the Byzantines for the planned maritime expedition against the Arabs in 715. See *Theophanis*, 385.5-9; *Nikephoros*, ch. 50. Rhodes was consequently taken over by the Arabs in 716/7, an event recorded by Bar Hebraeus [*The Chronography of Gregory Abû'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician commonly known as Bar Hebraeus*, translated from Syriac by E. A. Wallis Budge, vol. I, London 1932, 107: *And he captured Pergamos and Rhodes, and he emptied them of spoil]*. It should be remembered that Rhodes was the only island of the Aegean Sea comprised in the maritime theme of Cibyrraioton. Constantine VII also informs us that the coast opposite the island, Loryma, was called "hoplotheke", arms depot [*De thematibus*, 78.13-14]. See Ragia, *Geography I*, 221 and note 103.

[80] Zarnitz, *SBS 4*, 184 no 1; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 74.

[81] *DO Seals 2*, no 42.5; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I, no 78.

Now, according to the geographical sources, the term Cyclades means "the islands that encircle Delos". This explanation was also given by Constantine VII in *De Thematibus*.[82] However, this explanation does not solve the problem we are facing when we are dealing with the warehouse units of Nesoi and Cyclades islands at the end of the 7th c. We would have to admit either that the province of Nesoi had already dissolved, and that the rest of the Cyclades islands comprised in it were actually attached to the unit called Cyclades (i.e. Andros, Tenos, Naxos, Paros and others), or that the term Cyclades on the seal of 687-689 refers only to a part of the province of Hellas, meaning the islands of Delos, Mykonos, Kythnos, Serifos and Kea. This would be a plausible assumption, because one thing is certain, **in geographic, and consequently in administrative terms, there can be no Cyclades unit without the island of Delos**. The number of the islands makes the possible administrative combinations infinite, but a clear pattern emerges on the basis of geography. Therefore, there is no reason to suppose that the Byzantines were using the terms interchangeably.[83] After 687/8, and most probably for facilitating the operation of the warehouses in the islands, the province of Nesoi dissolved into several pieces. In the period 687-697, which is the first period of the *apothekai* of the islands, two units are attested on the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* seal inscriptions, of the Nesoi and of the Cyclades islands. At the same time the warehouses of the islands of the eastern Aegean, Chios, Lesbos and Rhodes, functioned together with the warehouses of the western provinces of Asia Minor (Map I). The distinction is so clear, that it leads easily to the conclusion that the emperor Justinian II detached the islands of the eastern Aegean from the province of Nesoi and from the province of Hellas the islands of the Cyclades that had been assigned to it since Roman times, with the aim of making new units or attaching them to other units for administrative purposes. The province of Nesoi does not appear again, but there is one more seal of the Cyclades islands, dated to 696/7.[84] One should recall from the first part of this study that the reforms of Justinian II regarding the *vassilika kommerkia*, which were established in certain regions/provinces in 695, were carried out until their expiration date, the year 697.[85] It appears that the successor of Justinian II, Leontios, also retained the administrative reform of the islands. The year 697 was the year in which the administrative measures of Justinian II were finally swept away.

The sea to the north of the Cyclades was called "Aegean Sea". It was named after a small rock-island between Tenos and Chios, called Aix, according to Pliny, or after Aegae on the coast of Euboea, according to

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82 *De thematibus*, 83.25-27. Cf. *Dionysius,* in: GGM II, 135.525-136.1; *Pliny*, IV.XII. 65-67.

83 As it has been suggested by Malamut, *Iles I*, 49-50.

84 ZV, 196; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 139.

85 Ragia, *Geography I*, 214-215.



I. Apothekai of the Balkans: first period ca. 686-717

Strabo.[86] **In the Later Roman times, there is no administrative unit "Aigaion Pelagos". This term appears suddenly at the beginning of the 8th c., it is an invention of the Byzantines and constitutes a novelty in administrative practices.** John *apo eparchon* served as *genikos kommerkiarios* of the *apotheke* of Aigaion Pelagos for two consecutive years (711-713). His charge was renewed for the year 713/4.[87] His seals bear the effigy of the emperor Philippikos. However, the measure of creating

86 *Strabo,* 8.7.4; cf. *Strabo,* 13.2.68 (promontory on the Aeolian coast of Asia Minor); *Pliny*, IV.XI,51; cf. *De thematibus*, 82.4-7; commentary in MALAMUT, *Iles I*, 34; *TIB 10*, 50-51.

87 *DO Seals 2*, no 40.22; ZV no 213; BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 160, 168.

a geographic/administrative unit of Aigaion Pelagos carries some of the administrative inspiration of Justinian II, I therefore consider not improbable that a seal may be discovered in the future that will confirm the hypothesis that the unit of Aigaion Pelagos was created before 711. The term "Aigaion Pelagos" disappears after 713 for many years and reappears under the *vassilika kommerkia* during the reign of Leo III (734-735), a point that provides us with an analogy to other measures of Justinian II that were suppressed after his dethronement in 695 and were reinstated by the first emperor of the Isaurian dynasty.[88] In the period between the years 713 and 734, the warehouse of "all the Islands" functioned together with that of Asia, Caria and Hellespont (721/2).[89] The form displayed in this inscription is different from that used during the earlier period of the warehouses of the islands. No distinction between Nesoi and Cyclades islands is to be understood here. As in other cases two warehouse units, that of "all the islands" and that of Asia, Caria and Hellespont, functioned together in 721/2. The chronographer Theophanes, in relating a revolt against Leo III, mentions "*the Helladikoi and those from the Cyclades islands*".[90] The evidence leads to the conclusion that, contrary to the opinion of Zakythenos,[91] not only the term "Cyclades" survived in Byzantine times, but also that the periphery of the Cyclades islands was elevated to administrative unit status, meaning the warehouse unit of the Cyclades. What then does the term "Aigaion Pelagos" refer to and how does it fit into the administrative geography of the 8th c.?

The seals testify to the dissolution of the warehouse of the Cyclades islands in the decade of the 730s. The first seal comes from Melos, which had its own *vassilika kommerkia* in 730/1. The second seal shows that the *vassilika kommerkia* adjusted to the *dioikesis* of Andros, a fiscal unit much smaller than a Later Roman province, and the third seal that the south ring of the Cyclades, the islands of Melos, Thera, Anaphe, Ios and Amorgos, had its own *vassilika kommerkia* in 738/9.[92] This administrative arrangement actually recalls the classification of the islands by Strabo.[93] It appears, then, that the Cyclades islands (in the geographic sense, meaning the islands belonging to Nesoi and those around Delos belonging to Hellas) were divided in the *vassilika kommerkia* system according to

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88 ZV no 249; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 220. See Ragia, *Geography I*, 224.

89 ZV no 226; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App I no 186.

90 *Theophanis*, 405.16; *TIB 1*, 57-58.

91 D. Zakythinos, *Μελέται περὶ τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρήσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπαρχιακῆς διοικήσεως ἐν τῷ Βυζαντινῷ κράτει,* ΕΕΒΣ 17 (1941) 254-256.

92 ZV no 242 and commentary, 193 table 34; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I no 211, 226, 229.

93 Those islands were close to Crete, along with Therasia, Sikinos, Lagousa, Folegandros, Kimolos and Sifnos. See *Strabo*, 10.5.1. Amorgos was also considered as belonging to the Sporades, cf. *Strabo*, 10.5.12.

need (Map II). There seems to be no pattern, judging from the case of Melos, and there is no way of knowing whether other neighboring islands were comprised in the unit of Melos or in the dioikesis of Andros. The seals, however, indicate that from 730 onwards the *vassilika kommerkia* of the islands may have functioned on the basis of the *dioikeseis*. This arrangement would have been more convenient and flexible. Among these seals, as already noted above, comes the seal of the "vassilika kommerkia of the islands of Aigaion Pelagos" (734/5). At this point it appears doubtful that the term "Aigaion Pelagos" holds the content ascribed to it by Constantine VII in the 10th c. In other words, it is doubtful that in the 8th c. this unit comprised the islands of the Cyclades, of the north and of the eastern Aegean Sea,[94] that is, all the Aegean islands except for those that had been incorporated in other thematic territories (for example Rhodes in the theme of Cibyrraioton and Samos in the theme of Samos). It appears thus that the unit called in the 8th c. "Aigaion Pelagos" by the Byzantines comprised the sea and the islands north of the Cyclades. The seals of the warehouses of Andros and of Melos corroborate this hypothesis, which will, nevertheless, only be confirmed if a new seal of another Cycladic island, dated to the same period (730-741) is published in the future. After 738/9 there are no more seals of the islands. The naval unit of Aigaion Pelagos was founded during the reign of the emperor Constantine V. The first known *droungarios* was the father of Theophanes the Confessor, Leo. A number of seals of the theme's functionaries are saved, vaguely dated to the period from 750 to 850 or more precisely around the turn of the 8th to the 9th c.[95]

The administrative history of the great island of Crete differs from that of Nesoi. Already in Later Roman times Crete was a separate province under the orders of a consul.[96] Its administrative "autonomy" continued into the 7th and in the 8th centuries. The island is represented in the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* system by two seals. The first is dated to 688/9 and indicates that Crete shared in the administrative reform of Justinian II in 687.[97] The second is a newly published seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Crete, dated to the years 730-741[98] (Maps I, II). The *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* of Crete never functioned together

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94 *De thematibus*, 82-83.

95 On the theme of Aigaion Pelagos see Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*, 76-79, which is, I think, the best treatise in spite of newer bibliography; Winkelmann, *Rangstruktur*, 108-110; Oikonomidès, *Listes*, 353, and *DO Seals 2*, 110; P. Yannopoulos, *Η οργάνωση του Αιγαίου κατά τη μεσοβυζαντινή περίοδο*, in: Τριήμερο Αιγαίου (21-23 Δεκ. 1989), Πρακτικά, ed. D. Kalamakes – G. Zoras, 213-216; Zakythinos, ΕΕΒΣ 17 (1941) 256-259; Malamut, *Iles I*, 304; *TIB 10*, 78-79.

96 *Synekdemos*, 649.3-650.16. D. Tsougarakis, *Byzantine Crete from the 5th Century to the Venetian Conquest* (= Historical Monographs 4), Athens 1988, 155-164.

97 Oikonomides, *Dated Seals*, no 22; ZV no 159 comments; Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung*, App. I, no 83.

98 I. Touratsoglou – I. Koltsida-Makre – Y. Nikolau, *New Lead Seals from Crete,* SBS 9 (2006) 49-68 no 2.



II. Balkan *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* under Leo II and successors, ca. 717-787/8

with the *apothekai* of other islands. The evolution of the administrative status of Crete shows that the island never belonged to any other administrative unit. The province of Crete was governed by an archon, but there is yet no solid proof that it was upgraded to thematic status before the 9th c.[99]

With a significant delay the Byzantine state tried to put into practice the economic institution of the warehouses, which had been tested in

[99] On Crete see D. Tsougarakis, *The Byzantine Seals of Crete*, SBS 2 (1990) 141-142 and no 16-23 with references; *DO Seals 2*, no 36.1-2 and commentary; Zakythinos, ΕΕΒΣ 17 (1941) 263-267; Malamut, *Iles I*, 298-300; Tsougarakis, [as above note 96], 164-178, esp. 173-174.

Asia Minor for approximately thirty years, in Balkan regions where it maintained a steady foothold. The picture emerging from the geographic study of the institution's evolution is indicative of the conditions in the European parts of the empire, where the events had brought about the collapse of the Late Roman administrative model by the end of the 7th c. This appears to be the reason why instead of warehouses of provinces we see only warehouses of cities. The warehouses of Constantinople and Mesembria functioned already under Justinian II. The warehouse of Thessalonica, according to the testimony of the seals, started operating in 713. However, in contrast to warehouses of cities and regions with a significant and well recorded military role in Asia Minor (i.e. Pylai and Sangarios, Sebastopolis of Armenia), only the military role of Mesembria is certain for the Balkans. In the warehouse system Constantinople and Thessalonica held a special place because of extensive economic activities that were carried out in these cities. Although there is no trace or allusion in the sources that their warehouses catered for particular needs of the military regiments of the empire, their significance as chief administrative and economic centers as well as bastions of Byzantine domination and power in the Balkans fits into the frame of the alleged military function of the warehouse institution.

Depicting the distribution of the European warehouses in the maps produced an unexpected conclusion: the evolution of the *apothekai* in the southern Illyricum, meaning the provinces of Hellas, of Crete and of Nesoi, is similar to the institution's evolution in Asia Minor. Under Justinian II the warehouses expanded in the provinces of Nesoi and Crete, and surprisingly enough, in the province of Hellas. Indeed Hellas, Crete and Nesoi appear as the only provinces of the south Balkans over which Byzantium held dominion at that time. The terms contained in the seal inscriptions certainly carry a geographic-administrative connotation. The only administrative problem that Justinian II had to solve was due to the great number of the islands, which would have made the effective operation of the *apothekai* of Nesoi difficult and somewhat dysfunctional. The solution that Justinian II gave was to dissolve the province of Nesoi and adjust the operation of the islands' warehouses to the ancient geographic divisions of the islands, as they were described by Strabo. Thus the *apothekai* of the islands of the eastern Aegean Sea functioned together with the *apothekai* of western Asia Minor, and the *apotheke* of the Cyclades islands functioned independently already in 687-689. This unit initially involved the islands that once belonged to the province of Hellas. However, it is a plausible assumption that already in 696/7 it included also the Cyclades islands that belonged to Nesoi. Missing from our picture of the warehouses of the islands under Justinian II to complete the puzzle is the warehouse of Aigaion Pelagos, which is attested on the seals only in 711. In total, three *apotheke* units of the islands were preserved until 717, of the Cyclades, of Aigaion Pelagos, and of Crete. After 717, administrative practice functioned on the basis of geography and

adapted to practical needs, therefore the *apotheke* of the Cyclades islands dissolved into smaller units. Nevertheless, the Cyclades as geographic/administrative term was preserved along with Aigaion Pelagos after that point.

Hellas is the only theme which can be directly linked with its apotheke, because they are both testified at about the same time, in 695 and in 698/9 respectively. A single seal of Hellas, dated to 738/9, provides us with the official terminology "*vassilika kommerkia of the strategia of Hellas*". The problems the central administration was faced with in the Balkans are manifested in the fact that although the theme of Thrace was the first established theme already under Constantine IV, the term "Thrace" is absent from the administrative terminology used for the warehouses and only appears under the *vasilika kommerkia i*n the 730s. Until then, the region of Thrace seems to be represented only by the warehouses of cities of the southern coast of the province of Europe, and by Mesembria. The fact that the *vassilika kommerkia* of Mesembria were functioning independently from those of Thrace underscores the significance of Mesembria as an outpost on the Bulgarian border and can be considered as an indication that the warehouses/*vassilika kommerkia* served military needs. Moreover, serious questions can be posed about the role that Constantinople would have had in providing supplies for the army of Thrace.

The evolution of the warehouses/*vassilika kommerkia* of the European parts and of the islands of the empire, as it was outlined above, shows that the little originality in administrative practices applied by the Byzantine government may be attributed to the actual geographic complexity of the Aegean Sea. In administrative terms the model that was already in use in Asia Minor was simply transferred to the Balkans. In other words, it appears that the Byzantine government experimented in Asia Minor, not in the European provinces. The "experiment" in Asia Minor concerned the adjustment of the operation of the *apothekai/vasilika kommerkia* to the territorial expansion of the themes, which preconditioned the establishment of the themes in fixed provinces. This model was applied in the Balkan parts of the Empire very late. In the context of the institution's Balkan evolution, only the case of Hellas is exceptional and instructive about the methods of the Byzantine government at the end of the 7th c. because of its strategic position for the Arab maritime wars. It also has to be observed that the existence of an *apotheke/vassilika kommerkia* in the Balkans does not necessarily lead to the creation of a theme in the same area. Crete, Thessalonika and Aigaion Pelagos formed new themes after their *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* stopped functioning. The significance of these conclusions must not be underestimated. The geographic distribution of the Balkan warehouses and of the islands, as it is depicted on maps I and II concerns those regions, where the Byzantines still maintained a steady foothold, the regions where their expansion to the rest of the Balkan Peninsula started from in the second

half of the 8th c. And this must be the starting point of any theory about the function and operation particularities of the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* institution in the European parts of the empire.

Catalogue of the seals of the *apothekai*, part two:
Balkans and islands of the Aegean Sea
Chronological classification

I. Justinian II, 685-695

685-695	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.10; BRANDES, app. I no 72
687/8	Nesoi, of Caria and Asia	ZARNITZ, SBS 4, 184 no 1; BRANDES, app. I no 74
687-9	Kyklades Islands	*DO Seals 2*, no 42.5; BRANDES, app. I, no 78
688/9	Constantinople	Cited after SBS 3, 173 no 10; BRANDES, app. I, no 82
688/90	Crete[100]	OIKONOMIDES, *Dated Seals* no 22; ZV no 159 comments; BRANDES, app. I, no 83
690/1	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.5; BRANDES, app. I, no 93
690/1	Mesembria	Cited after ZV, 182 table 30; BRANDES, app. I no 95
690/1	Constantinople	ZV no 169; BRANDES, app. I, no 93
690/1	Asia, Chios and Lesbos	*DO Seals 2*, 51.3; BRANDES, app. I, no 92
691/2	Constantinople	ZV no 175; BRANDES, app. I no 105
692/3	Constantinople	ZV 181; BRANDES, app. I no 113
692/3	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.7-8; BRANDES, app. I no 114
693/4	Constantinople	ZV 184; BRANDES, app. I no 119

II. Apothekai during the times of internal strife, 695-717

695/6	Constantinople and Hellespont[101]	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.6; ZV 190; BRANDES, app. I no 130
695/6	Mesembria	REGLING, BZ 24, 1924, 96; BRANDES, app. I no 132

[100] An unspecified monogram of the obverse of this seal, over the indictions, has led Brandes to the conclusion that this seal is a falsification, a point of view not shared by any editor.

[101] Instead of Hellespont, the latest editors read "Chersonese", meaning the Chersonese of Caria, which is geographically impossible.

695-7	Asia, Caria, Lycia, Rhodes and the Chersonese	*DO Seals 2*, no 65.1; Brandes, app. I no 129
696/7	Constantinople ... [102]	Sandrovskaja, SBS 4, 153-155; Brandes, app. I no 140a
696/7	Cyclades Islands	ZV 196; Brandes, app. I no 139
698/9	Constantinople	ZV no 199; Brandes, app. I no 145
698/9[103]	Mesembria	*DO Seals 1*, no 77.9; ZV no 200a; Brandes, app. I no 146
698/9	Hellas	Laurent, *Médailler*, no 118; Brandes, app. I no 144
700-2	Constantinople	ZV no 201; Brandes, app. I no 148
700-2	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.4; Brandes, app. I no 149
700-2	Mesembria	Cited after ZV 182 table 30; Brandes, app. I no 147
7th-8th c.	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.14
711-3	Aigaion Pelagos	*DO Seals 2*, no 40.22; Brandes, app. I no 160
713	Constantinople	ZV no 209; *DO Seals 5*, no 23.12; Brandes, app. I no 158
713	Thessalonica	ZV no 210; Brandes, app. I no 159
713/4	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.11; Brandes, app. I no 165
713/4	Constantinople	Koltsida-Makre no 8; ZV no 213.b; Brandes, app. I no 169
713/4	Aigaion Pelagos	ZV no 213; Brandes, app. I no 168
713/4	Mesembria	*DO Seals 1*, no 77.10; ZV no 217; Brandes, app. I no 166
715/6	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.13; Brandes, app. I no 172

III. Leo III, 717-741 (first period, apothekai)

718/9	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.1; Brandes, app. I no 176
720-9	Panion, Madytos and…	Koltsida-Makre no 7; Brandes, app. I no 201
720/1	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.2; Brandes, app. I no 179
721/2	Asia, Caria, all the Islands and Hellespont	ZV no 226; Brandes, app. I no 186

[102] The last part of the inscription is very difficult to read. Constantinople was followed by yet another, maybe even two locations.

[103] This date is favored by the editors and by Brandes.

722/3	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.9; BRANDES, app. I no 191
722/3[104]	Mesembria	*DO Seals 1*, no 77.11; ZV no 232a; BRANDES, app. I no 195
723/4	Constantinople	Cited after ZV 171 table 21; BRANDES, app. I no 193
723/4	Thessalonica	*DO Seals 1*, no 18.32; ZV no 230; BRANDES, app. I no 192
724/5	Thessalonica	*DO seals 1*, no 18.33; ZV no 231a; BRANDES, app. I no 194
726/7	Thessalonica	*DO seals 1*, no 18.49; ZV no 233; BRANDES, app. I no 196
727/8	Constantinople	ZV no 234; BRANDES, app. I no 197
727/8	Thessalonica	ZV no 237; BRANDES, app. I no 200

III. Vassilika kommerkia under Leo III and successors

730-741	Constantinople	*DO Seals 5*, no 23.15; BRANDES, app. I no 206
730-741	Thrake	*DO Seals 1*, no 71.15; ZV no 258; BRANDES, app. I no 207
730-741	Mesembria	SBS 3, 151-152; BRANDES, app. I no 209
730-741	Hellas	Cited after ZV 174 table 24; BRANDES, app. I no 210
730-741	Crete	I. TOURATSOGLOU – I. KOLTSIDA-MAKRE – Y. NIKOLAU, *New lead Seals from Crete,* SBS 9, 49-68 no 2.
730/1	Mesembria	*DO Seals 1,* no 77.5; ZV no 244; BRANDES, app. I no 214
730-731	Melos	ZV no 242; BRANDES, app. I no 211
732/3	Mesembria	*DO seals 1*, no 77.6; ZV no 247; BRANDES, app. I no 217
734/5	Thessalonica	SBS 3, 202 no 732; BRANDES, app. I no 221
734/5	Islands of the Aigaion Pelagos	ZV no 249; BRANDES, app. I no 220
735/6	Mesembria	Cited after ZV 183 table 30; BRANDES, app. I no 222
736/7	Mesembria	*DO seals 1,* no 77.7; BRANDES, app. I no 224
736/7	Hellas	SBS 5, 138 no 57; BRANDES, app. I no 225
736/7	Dioikesis of Andros	Cited after ZV 193 table 34; BRANDES, app. I no 226

[104] Here I am following the date given by the editors of *DO Seals 1*.

737/8	Thessalonica	ZV no 252; Brandes, app. I no 228
737/8	Thessalonica	Wassiliou – Seibt no 159
738/9	Mesembria	Cited after Brandes, app. I no 233b
738/9	Thessalonica	*DO seals 1*, no 18.28; ZV no 255a; Brandes, app. I no 233
738/9	Salonica	*DO seals 1*, no 18.29; ZV no 255b; Brandes, app. I no 234
738/9	Strategia of Hellas	ZV no 254; Brandes, app. I no 232
738/9	Melos, Thera, Anaphe, Ios and Amorgos	ZV no 242 commentary; Brandes, app. I no 229
740/1	Thessalonica	*DO Seals 1*, no 18.30; ZV no 256; Brandes, app. I no 235
741-750	Mesembria with Thrake	*DO Seals 1*, no 71.17, 18; ZV no 259 a-d; Brandes, app. I no 208
742/3	Thessalonica	ZV no 262; Brandes, app. I no 238
746/7	Thessalonica	ZV no 264; Brandes, app. I no 241
747/8	Thrake	*DO Seals 1*, no 71.16; Brandes, app. I no 243
747/8	Mesembria	*DO seals 1*, no 77.8; ZV no 265; Brandes, app. I no 242
748/9	Hellas	ZV no 266; Brandes, app. I no 244
751-775	Mesembria	ZV 196 table 34; Brandes, app. I no 247
751/2	Thrake and Hexamilion	*DO Seals 1*, 54.2; ZV no 270; Brandes, app. I no 249
755/6	Thessalonica	Oikonomides, *Dated seals*, no 38; Brandes, app. I no 251
773/4	Thessalonica	Oikonomides, *Dated seals*, no 39; Brandes, app. I no 256
778/9	Thessalonica	*DO Seals 1*, no 18.31; Brandes, app. I no 259
783/4	Thessalonica	ZV no 273; Brandes, app. I no 260
785/6	Thrake	ZV no 274; Brandes, app. I no 262
787/8	Thrake	*DO Seals 1*, no 71.19; ZV no 276a; Brandes, app. I no 264

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